

FANTASY

Autumn.
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Linoleum block by Walter E. Manges

Thought as clean as the soil's unthinking labor,
As sure, as far-off from fear and hope,
Has yielded a fruit that is strong with the being
Of earth in the earthy consciousness of men.
Turbine and dynamo, locomotive and skyward tower—
This harvest is come, like any other,
Beautiful and bare from the dreamless ground.

—MacKnight Black

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ANNOUNCEMENTS



We are glad to be able to publish facing this page the prize-winning poem in our "Sleep" contest, Brent Allison's of Highland Park, Ill. Our appreciation goes to Stanton A. Coblenz, the well-known editor of *Wings*, for his prompt and careful reading of the contesting poems. The second prize poem will appear in the Winter number.

To date we have received very few entries on the *Sea* theme which we announced as our next contest. For the benefit of those who did not see a Summer *FANTASY*, we repeat that the closing date is not until November 15th, still allowing ample time for entries to reach here. The length limit is again thirty lines. In consideration of the boundless opportunities here offered, we should like to see many more poems sent in.

Hymn to Sleep

Brent Allinson

*Fill up my eyes, my ears, my aching mind
The windows of myself, my very pores!—
Fill them with liquid languor, soothing, kind,
As when in Spring the Blue Nile brims its shores
To flood parch'd Egypt! . . Sleep, lave now my soul
That yawns like some beach'd coracle on the strand,
Enfold it where thy freshening waters roll
Till it shall float far from the thirsting land
In twilight, calm and free—
Till it shall slip from bondage of the blind,
From Pharaoh Hunger's lords of want and wars,
Into a soundless sea! . .*

*Unfurl thy sunset banners, vivid, vast,
Over the prow of my surrender'd bark,
Bind me like young Ulysses to the mast
Who feared the Sirens calling in the dark! . .
Beyond the gates of Day and Circumstance
Thy pearly river winds towards Acheron,
But 'ere the gulfs be reached there lies, perchance,
Palm-fringed, flamingo-guarded, bathed in dawn
Circe's enchanted isle!—
Where moor'd, the sailor dreams all troubles past,
Hears faintly from her groves the morning lark,—
Glimpses her breathless smile!*

*And who shall say, if he adventure nearer,
Where the enthroned Enchantress darkly waits
Her fawning creatures, whether to love or fear her?—
Or who those forms that gather at her gates
Speaking in fragments of knowledge and desires,
In words too subtle for the mortal ear?—
Or, pressing onward till he see the spires
Beyond Aeaea, shimmer silver-clear—
The domes of Xanadu!—
Whether than Sleep there may be something dearer,—
His bark blown out by her dark Sister Fates,—
New joys in islands new!*

I ADDRESS YOU, ELEANOR

AUGUST W. DERLETH

This day, a year gone. Eleanor, do you remember
The warmth and wind enclosing that September?
How the asters and the gentians waved that day in the low grass?
And the blowing leaves? Thus, slightly, does a year pass.

Deep in the haze-hung blue the swallows arm for flight
And the colors of earth fold slowly away for winter's night.
A year gone, and the long sky reaching into dream
Across the pitted depths. Far echoes of an osprey's scream
Against the afternoon like the thin year done,
A year no more than a long hour slowly run.

This is a tired day with the slow sifting of memories
Occupying the sun. Too few! There are lees
In the cup, and remembrance of the year dies
Imperceptibly away. Another year lies
Along the blue, beyond the hills; no more
The troubled past, not again the hollowed store
Of trivial dreams. Another year will lend
No further hope. This is an end.

A year gone, a long year, a thin year, a small year and alone.
Below this high-arched hill, the river scarcely ripples for another stone.
There is laughter in the wind and in the sun—
Twenty-five years gone, they say . . . not only one.

SUPPLY THEM WINGS

KEITH THOMAS

Let them fly forth, the hours between,
As butterflies that mount the sky
And disappear in space unseen,
To leave no mark for any eye.

Forbid their lingering, supply
Them wings, full-grown and bright and keen—
Let them fly forth, the hours between,
As butterflies that mount the sky.

The hours are swift when we have been
Together; they are quickly by—
But these go crawling, ugly, mean,
More slowly than a long-drawn sigh:
Let them fly forth, the hours between,
As butterflies that mount the sky.

The Warrior of the Forlorn Cause,
Who served the Desolate Hope,
Sank to a long and weary pause
On a scarred and bleeding slope.

Beneath, he saw his wavering ranks
Crawling through smoke and mud.
And the thorny brush and briery banks
Ran scarlet with their blood;

Ran scarlet as the foe came out
And charged with a blazoned might,
And the mountains reeled with the rush and rout
Of figures in whirling flight.

But the Warrior of the Forlorn Cause
Stared at the staggered skies.
And in place of wounds, and blustery wars,
A vision blest his eyes.

He stood upon the peak at last,
And his followers crowded round,
And their gaunt and fevered days were past,
And their heads were olive-crowned.

About him, rank on rank, he viewed
His enemies bowing low.
And the reverent eyes of the multitude
Were lit with a grateful glow.

And their fingers clutched no more at stones,
Nor wielded the maiming brands,
But their voices blended in choiring tones,
And lilies were in their hands.

Their voices blended in songs of praise
For the Desolate Hope come true,
The Hope whose rainy-breasted grays
Had turned to a shining blue.

And the Forlorn Cause was reared on high
To the stars and the wind and the sun.
And its banners beckoned the passer-by
To a rule of light begun.
And its radiance dazzled meadow and sky
With the glory of Causes Won.

* * *

Undeclared—continued

But as the spellbound dreamer smiled,
 Slowly the peak withdrew.
Again he gazed on a rocky wild
 Where torrents of crimson flew.

Beneath, he saw his wavering ranks
 Crawling through smoke and mud.
And the thorny brush and briery banks
 Ran scarlet with their blood.

But the Warrior of the Forlorn Cause,
 Who served the Desolate Hope,
Was roused from his long and weary pause
 On the scarred and bleeding slope.

He clenched his sword with a fierce resolve,
 And summoned the troops below,
"To the peak! To the peak! While the stars revolve,
 We will never bow to a foe!"

And as he led the rallying band
 By boulder and cliff and stream,
His voice had a throb of fresh command,
 And his eyes the glow of a dream.

FACES ON GLASS

KERKER QUINN

The broken windshield glass
I just miss treading in the unpeopled
traditional dark
is diamond-cut with faces (small, alive)
of milkmaids from an old song,
of presadist ogres from Andersen or Grimm,
of fat-ankled mistresses of the Prussian kings . . .

They are afraid:
they suck their cheeks in,
screw their lips
like purple-skinned Johns in Salome chargers . . .
They are afraid:
for either must they remain
to be subdivided by overpassing trucks
or be swept away to the dump-heap
to fraternize with rusty piston-rings.

BRIDE OF THE MOON

JOSEPH JOEL KEITH

The moon that yielded
A cloak of gold
Has shielded
My bride from cold.

The moon that blessed me
With youth's dark lyre
Has dressed me
In fragrant fire.

The nights outnumbered
By days are stone,
Have slumbered
Dreamless, alone:

The moon that tarried
But would not stay
Has carried
My bride away.

WINGS ONE NIGHT

RICHARD LEON SPAIN

Wings without color come garrulously forth
Past the eye of Venus veering down the West
On beyond Scorpio and Sagittarius,
Through the dim gates of clouds and on . . .
Wings that are harnessed to a voice of thunder,
Echoing among the winds; winding through the dark.
The night clutches, runs screaming after
The wings, clutching wildly with a big net, just missing.

The wings are a part of a thing
That sings a few songs besides the
Lyric song of voiced engines—
Wind-song in wires—bright star-songs
Racing with the traveling wings
On their bright journey with messages . . .
A green star-lamp for a song of frost
And all the cold metal that was ever forged;
A red star-beacon for reassurance
And a song of an ultimate port and silence
And rest for wings—
Tired wings—tired wings of metal . . .

LONELY MEN

JOHN LEE HIGGINS

There is one
I can see
In the rain,
Bitterly

Seeking shelter,
Sick and thin,
Cold winds
Upon his skin.

Seeking straw
For a bed
Where beasts
Are tenanted.

"You are weary,
Your feet
Leave stains
On the street.

You are frozen,
Cold as stones;
Here is fire
For your bones.

You are hungry,
Hunger gnaws
Like a thing
That has claws.

Here is honey,
Drink and bread,
And a place
To lay your head."

"This is comfort.
This is fair,
Needs seen
Bring repair.

I am hungry,
Weary, yet,
These things
I can forget."

"You are hungry,
This food

Will give color
To your blood."

"My hunger
Is a coal
That burns
In my soul.

My hunger
Is your breast
Where the weariest
Can rest.

My hunger
Is your eyes
And the woman
In your thighs."

"Son of woman,
Much or little,
Hunger needs
More than victual.

Nothing strange,
Being human,
Needs cry
For a woman.

You are cold
Saddest one,
In my body
There is sun.

There is quiet
Lone fellow
In my body's
Deep hollow.

Lie here,
Let your head
Ease and
Be comforted.

Fold me,
Rise and then,
Take the road
Of lonely men."

THE GOLD BROOCH

By George F. Meeter

After an apprenticeship writing for the pulps, George F. Meeter has definitely arrived with recent acceptances from Story and Esquire. Born nearly thirty years ago in Eastside New York, Mr. Meeter worked halfway around the world on various tankers and freighters, not to mention a stowaway voyage back from the Hawaiian Islands after being thrown on the beach there. He spent a year in the Army in Texas at the age of fifteen and spent many years in a railroad yardoffice—at the same time managing to read the Harvard Classics! But he is most proud—we wonder if this is for print—"that I used to make, in collaboration with my brother, the best homebrew in Phillie". In our Summer issue, we ran a long poem by Mr. Meeter. But read the story—it's even better.

DMITRI PAVLOVITCH, who was an orphan, had shipped out of St. Petersburg on a Norwegian tramp steamer running to South America. But now he was back again and had been paid off and was counting on being free for a whole week.

Free for what? Ah! the answer to that fairly danced among his thoughts as he traveled from St. Petersburg toward Gatchina, where Katerina Alexandrovna Ilyitch lived with her parents. The sunshine was very fine, the birds sang altogether sweetly and his heart felt like bursting. Everything was beautiful, beautiful.

He came up to the Ilyitch house, a modest residence on the edge of town, early in the forenoon, and since it was Sunday felt sure they would be attending church. True enough, no one came to his knocks. But his satisfaction did not lessen: this made such a fine opportunity for a surprise. All he had to do was wait behind a corner for their return, when it ought to be amusing to leap out and confront them all.

Strangely enough—since so few plans work out as premeditated—this one was successful. Katya (how lovely she looked, and in the fresh light of day) together with her mother and Fyodor Alexandrovitch her father came strutting down the street in the sunshine and

he leaped out just as they reached their door.

"Boo!"

"Mitya! Why dearest!" Right there in the street Katerina Alexandrovna put her arms around him and kissed him resoundingly.

It was enough. Well, or a thousand times over. It even seemed impossible that such happiness, such a store of it all for one person, could exist in the world. Ridiculous!

The older people were breasting their own astonishment, and bubbles of conversation flew about like the breeze as they moved into the house. Moreover the taste of that one kiss lay on Dmitri's lips like perfume . . . Naturally it was not a thing to be doing more than once with others around—but just wait.

With the samovar warming Fyodor Alexandrovitch brought forth a bottle of vodka—"Just for a little sip, my dears." Dmitri, with his valise already open, was producing gifts for all.

"See here, scarfs." He spoke jubilantly. "And genuine silk too. Perfume, straight from Paris—by way of Buenos Aires, that is. I found you a pipe, Fyodor Alexandrovitch, that I hope you'll like. And this for Katya's mamma—I knew dress goods would be appropriate. What a bother I had bringing these in."

The Gold Brooch—continued

Everyone was pleased, and his heart sang excited little songs while the light danced in his eyes meeting those of Katerina Alexandrovna.

"You seem to be doing very well," the elder Ilyitch remarked. "Yes, very well if I must say it."

"Thank you, Fyodor Alexandrovitch, I like that." Dmitri felt very naive at times. "Well, but just think—I've been told I can get an officer's ticket in no time. Third mate—and then better. But," looking emphatically toward Katya, "I don't know if I'll go back even. Perhaps I'll stay here and do something else."

"What?" Fyodor Alexandrovitch looked at him interestedly.

"Oh," confusedly, "I should have to see. But anyway," solemnly, "something to make a success, to support Katerina Alexandrovna." From a pocket in his blouse he drew out a handful of rouble notes, flourishing them proudly. "You see, I have saved. I am already in a position to begin. I might even be able to work into a little business of some kind, eh?"

Fyodor Alexandrovitch, himself a small merchant, moreover an ambitious one who would trade anywhere for an honest—mind you, an honest—commission, beamed.

"I felicitate you again," he said. "Though of course," this in the most playful tone, "no one here has counted those roubles yet. To be quite serious . . . Dmitri Pavlovitch, I am not wealthy, yet it won't be said of Katya—by any lad—that her papa settled *nothing* on her."

At such undisguised sanction Dmitri's joy actually knew no bounds at last; he wished to embrace the other—and did, during the time Katya was on the way upstairs with her presents.

THERE was to be other company for dinner it developed: a Mihail Mekarov and his wife, to whom the Ilyitches owed a treat because of the previous week. The visitors were just appearing, in fact; Dmitri was intro-

duced to them. But he hardly noticed, hardly spoke—already on pins and needles for a new sight of Katya.

She had changed her dress, and fastened a lace fichu over her hair. He gaped as she came down the steps: what a dainty picture!

With the others busy talking there was a better chance to study her now. But in that way he received the faintest of shocks—was it fancy or did he really perceive shadows under her eyes? Half a year before he had left her the freshest and cleanest looking of God's young creatures. Was it fancy that her eyes seemed now to conceal some expression of fatigue? Of—sophistication?

Upon being taxed she admitted to having lost sleep lately, alluded vaguely to outings.

"What sort of outings?"

"Oh . . . just here and there. What are outings usually?"

Well, one couldn't be expected to rusticate, or retire from the world. It had even been plain from her letters that certain attentions, certain other young men—why of course. To be expected. That much should not detract from his own supreme feeling, which still, merely because of her nearness, tickled his body into little shivers of ecstasy. All afternoon, all evening that went on: a small ferment, sending him breathless over a touch, a surreptitious kiss.

And then it was really evening—the Mekarovs gone, the two elder Ilyitches upstairs. And in the parlor on the leather covered, mahogany backed sofa only himself and, all fragrance and bewitching seduction, the woman of his dreams. Or was he still dreaming?

But no. The dream had at last come true.

And oh, this first half hour of delicious slow movement, the mere clinging. This deliberation for savoring to the full each kiss, the exquisite new-oldness of contact. Actually—for once—reality seemed to be excelling every dream that had led to it.

But then, a subtle difference. Quickly, if with horrified bewilderment, he sensed it. Katya was passively allowing her enthusiasm, her first warm excitement, to dwindle. In fact she was presently lying altogether motionless in his arms. Moreover she began talking, and of what! pointless superfluous matters, concerning friends, household affairs—anything but the speech of lovers. Hardly could he make himself follow such threads of talk. And so answered only at intervals, sitting there in negative stillness. Apparently she never noticed, however, for at least another half hour gossiping casually—after which she settled down more comfortably and went to sleep!

His thoughts were black, then. He felt weighted by so much more than the light burden in his arms. The inner fellow, his soul fellow was weeping miserably all at once. But in such bleak, deadening despondency that the outside person could only wait in frozen dismay. Stunned.

At last she stirred, yawned prettily.

"Time to go home, Dmitri Pavlovitch, don't you think?"

He stayed stolidly quiet, whereupon she stroked his hair softly. "What's the matter, darling?"

"Matter!" He uttered the word suddenly, then fell silent. Nevertheless she waited. "I can hardly get my thoughts out," he muttered at last. "Listen, why are you acting this way, Katya? Don't you realize that you're building walls between us?"

"Walls . . . I don't understand."

"Katya, you've changed. Really now, haven't you?"

"Nonsense!" Was her laugh for amusement, embarrassed, what? "No, I feel quite natural."

And in fact she did grow demonstrative once more. But now Dmitri sat stiffly. He was completely depressed. What an anticlimax to respond now. Why should he have had to explain anything, why should she have waited for that. It shouted its way up from the

crevices in his brain—why? why?—and he could not understand.

All at once she became impatient. Jumping up she strode to the other side of the room, around the centre-table, fingering with a show of absorption the clutter of bric-a-brac there and on the mantelpiece. Then she returned, grasped his hands, pulled until he got to his feet.

"It's late. You'll come tomorrow, Dmitri?"

He felt ironic. There was, it seemed, some irony here that persisted in coming to the surface.

"And isn't that the woman of it," he remarked, in tones strange to himself. "The indirect approach. Katerina Alexandrovna, you're clever."

She checked him furiously.

"Listen, *must* you be sarcastic? You were always. And I've had enough of it . . . oh, I hate you, do you hear?"

SHE fled toward the next room. Quite dumbly he followed. But not after *her*—his hat was there. As speechlessly he picked it up and made for the door. With his hand on the knob, however, she ranged alongside.

"Aren't you going to kiss me good night, Mitya?"

At first he simply stared. But then: "Listen, Katerina Alexandrovna . . . if you can hate me in six months absence, I should have stayed away longer. Then no doubt you could have forgotten me entirely."

Still she regarded him steadily. Her glance was a shaft that rooted him to the spot.

"I spoke too hastily," she murmured. "You know I didn't mean any such thing, darling."

Well, and there you are. He felt almost eager again. Yet there was something, something.

"Katerina Alexandrovna," he said solemnly, "I don't believe you care for me any longer. Really I don't, now. But I know I'd feel better satisfied if only I understood what the change is—

The Gold Brooch—continued

and why. Katya, we have always been so sincere—remember we always promised that much? So tell me why you're acting differently now."

"But how can I—if there is no difference?"

He did not believe her. He did not know just what he did believe, but certainly not this.

"Listen, Katya. Have you found someone else you care about?"

"Of course not."

"'Of course'! What do you mean 'of course'?"

"Well, that I haven't."

"But what then? Could it be too much absence, must we simply get used to each other all over again? Or—these 'outings' of yours . . . oh darling, I have to know!"

"But you do know—everything." She was laughing at him again. "No, I can't deny having been out more than usual of late. But Mitya dear, don't you trust me? Now go away please, darling—it's really late, you know. And if you dare stay away tomorrow! . . . what's more, you *will* kiss me good night now?"

So it was that, after all, he went away feeling—really making himself feel—that the world once more turned properly on its axis.

But in the morning, in his fifty kopeck room in an inn kept by one Gorstkin, he awoke in a very gloomy frame of mind, thinking intently. A thin drizzle of summer rain hissed against the window: perhaps that dull sound, and dreary outlook, was struggling to create its counterpart in his heart. Tiny fears stirred there—bogeys, lurking in the mind's dark recesses, popping out when least expected. For the life of him he found it impossible to visit Katerina Alexandrovna that morning.

But then in the late afternoon the rain stopped, the rain clouds crept away. There was even a sunset. Perhaps he was a true child of the sun, he felt so immensely cheered over the

change from sodden to brilliant skies. After all, he was practically betrothed, was he not? Katya was waiting for him. Only one little mouse of a thought came nibbling at his new serenity, and suddenly he was very anxious to have that mouse killed.

Sure enough, when he appeared at the Ilyitch home Katya indicated her pleasure. Of course she dug him a little, making him understand in that way that he might have shown up sooner. But that part was all a delicious game, so that presently he felt warm and excited again, and almost forgot the little mouse that had to be exterminated.

He remembered when they were alone once more, the lamp somewhat dimmed, the mahogany backed sofa supporting him as he supported her.

"Katya darling." He held her tightly. "Just a little thing—to explain, if you can. First, may I ask . . . do you still insist you acted quite naturally last night, even to the talk—even the sleeping?"

She regarded him lazily. But then, stubbornly: "Yes, I do. Mitya, can't you let well enough alone? I'm just learning myself, perhaps." She stirred restlessly under his grasp.

"Well, but if you cared as you used to, Katya, how could you have taken me so casually—after all these months! It proves but one thing," mournfully. "You don't care as much. No—and that's what makes me so sad." Was Dmitri Pavlovitch going to weep? "Good heavens," he cried, "if I can't interest a woman supposed to be in love with me any more than to have her fall asleep the first time we're together in half a year—"

IT was simply too monstrous to finish. But he sat with bowed head hoping fervently that she, Katya, would kill the mouse once and for all.

His slightly fevered glance chanced to rest on a very handsome brooch pinned to her dress. Strange, he had

not even noticed it before. A large red and white cameo, set in gold filigree, gleaming brightly in the midst of her corsage.

"I wish I'd given you that," he remarked suddenly. "It's a beauty. Did your father get it?"

She did not answer.

"But why don't you speak, dearest—you're not mad because I mentioned last night? And by the way, was it your father?"

Still no reply.

"Oh, but come, Katya . . . who gave it to you?"

"You're sure you won't be offended all over again?"

"Katerina Alexandrovna, *who gave you that brooch?*"

"Ah, who else but my father, you idiot?" She laughed, expressing a bit of malice. But her eyes looked faintly harried.

"No, I am not to be meddled with!" Suddenly, quite loudly, Dmitri said that. "I know you're lying now, Katya. Come, come, you *must* tell me."

"Very well then. Boris Ivanovitch Semsanov, who works for the lawyer Drushky, made me a present of it. But you needn't be evil minded, Mitya, you big bear, or think wrong thoughts. I don't love him, but you!"

Nevertheless she stirred restlessly again.

As for Dmitri Pavlovitch, his heart ran down to his boots and back and then started jumping across his chest like mad.

So this was it. The once well concealed mystery. He remembered, now, having seen that name Semsanov in a letter or two: she had met him on the river during the winter skating.

"You're pretty friendly with him?"

No answer.

"You've paid him in kisses for his gifts, perhaps?"

Her head shook no. But finally she admitted having been kissed once. Then her eyes sparkled brightly.

"And what of it? After all, a little kiss. Must I bury myself?"

His own head motioned sadly. Almost whispering he said: "This is new talk from you, Katerina Alexandrovna. You never used to be this way . . . yes, I see it, you are changed. You don't love me."

"But I do—oh, will you stop nagging?"

But Dmitri Pavlovitch had more than one mouse to be killed now.

"Katya darling. If I stay here now, never go back to the ship—will you send this Semsanov where he belongs?"

She shrugged. "He has already asked me to a theatre party next week. I ought to keep my word—I promised."

He stared more dazedly. But with *this* sort of reality to be faced he went still inside as a stone. He wished to shout, be dramatic: the heroic central role had always appealed to him. But now he could only say quietly:

"I see. I see. Well, that's all right. You can go with Semsanov then—it's all right. I thought all along there was something in the wind, I smelled it all right. Well, but I can't help that, it certainly can't be helped, can it? So I'll say goodbye, Katerina Alexandrovna."

Still, he continued to sit there, like a stone image, and just as quietly Katya sat too. For one instant she seemed about to smile, even to speak. Then the spell of stillness, of immobility, again triumphed.

This strange quiet persisted so long that a curious thing happened. It was as if the silence became sensitive, actually working up some tensivity of its own, that became part of an atmosphere able to hold certain bodies nerveless and inert against each other.

Dmitri Pavlovitch felt it sharply. After a long time he offered the remark that life was truly a mess. "Fate, fate," he added sombrely.

The very sound of his voice lessened the tension. In fancy he sensed his companion's spirit creeping softly toward his own. He was not at all surprised when her head moved as if tiredly down to his shoulder.

The Gold Brooch—continued

But now he experienced an overwhelming sadness. How to account for it? This girl leaning against him, for instance. Who was she really? What did he actually know of her? Was she the person he had loved so hotly in the past? Had he even known that one? And if so, was that one dead now, and this one no more than a stranger, somebody he was fighting desperately but quite mistakenly for? Because if she were a stranger, how could she ever enter into the sweetness that had always closed on Katya and himself like a shining golden ball?

SUDDENLY he wanted to talk. But when he began, his words came jerkily, bridging long silences in between. Once or twice his companion moaned faintly, crouching closer. However, she did not interrupt. In time he was speaking better, trying to say something of what had been in his heart during the months at sea.

"I thought of you so steadily, Katya. Oh, there were so many nights, so many things to think about. I remember one time just before we docked here. I lay awake in my bunk, there was the rumble of the ship's machinery. It was the only thing alive in the stillness. Such a quiet sound, so peaceful! Somehow it made my thoughts reach out toward you clearer than ever. I tell you I saw quite plainly, Katya, make no mistake. Ever since leaving you, each thing that happened, every thought, every deed, every experience, I saw had in some fashion got itself caught in the idea of *you*—had either come from you or was traveling out of me toward you. And do you know what that meant, even what it means? That without you I'm only a half soul, a half consciousness. And without me you are too. That is," he felt himself falter all of a sudden, "you would have been once, though now . . . now I can't say."

The power surged back in him. "But Katya, it's the truth . . . you were *with* me those days at sea. Even if I forgot

for a little, then it always came back with such a lovely stab—that I was even then on the way to seeing you. Yes, so soon—so soon. It seemed, as I lay there thinking, such a long time since I'd been able to say—"I love you!" And I *wanted* so to repeat it.

"I even wondered—in what I thought of then as foolish moments—if anything would be changed, if anything ever *could* change that sweetness, that wholeness in me, to something less. And then I laughed. Katya, how I laughed at myself for daring, for even bothering to think of such a thing. I didn't want to think of it, I simply felt too magnificent . . . I tell you the feeling swept me more and more clearly that everything I had been and done had by then become identified with you, and as all roads—so they say—once led to Rome so all my roads and all of me, dear Katya, led to you!"

He had not known, himself, that he was possessed of such eloquence. It leaped from his brain, shimmered along his words. And even before he was finished Katerina Alexandrovna had crawled deeper into his arms, weeping hysterically. Several times emotion caught her so strongly that she held to him with all her might. "Mitya!" she whispered. Over and over at last, in sobbing undertones that wrenched at his heart like fingers. She said no more than that—apparently just calling to him from somewhere far off.

He felt his whole being softening now. A warm triumph invaded his senses. Indeed all was not lost if this, this . . . He was prepared to believe that everything was as it should be, the past hours an evil dream, the person lying so passionately and responsively in his arms the person of old, the girl he loved.

And then he noticed—by quite the most insidious chance of all—that she was not even wearing the little silver ring with which he had pledged himself so many months before. It was true, true! He was amazed over having fail-

ed to notice this before. But more than amazement this sudden upsetting again, this emptiness sweeping his mind clear.

Very hesitantly he inquired, holding her hand stupidly as if for inspection.

"Katya . . . the ring?"

She appeared startled. As if the question introduced other things, foreign things in a mind temporarily obsessed by a single idea. At last, in a peculiar voice she remarked:

"I merely left it upstairs . . . silly dear."

"But I don't—don't understand. Do you wish to avoid losing it, has your finger grown thinner? It seems so strange—and heavens, I hadn't even noticed its absence!"

She shrugged now, as if the slightest bit petulant.

"But must you ask me about everything—everything?" Then, almost stammeringly: "I left it upstairs because I—I oh, to tell you the truth I don't know why!"

She began weeping again but all at once her tears were simply hateful to him. He hated himself, Katerina Alexandrovna, the ring, that gleaming brooch, in short everything—the whole world was hateful. And the mice, instead of being exterminated had become elephants.

Very stolidly he detached himself, got up.

"Will you fetch my valise please." He spoke calmly, giving her a steady gaze.

AFTER a moment of deep meditation during which her own eyes did not waver, she arose also. The suitcase, it developed, had been shoved behind a silk screen standing in one corner; presently she was handing it to him.

He took it without a word. Then walked toward the door.

"Well, goodbye, Mitya dear. I can only say goodbye, isn't that so?"

But she stared at him curiously for all that, and he returned the look. (*Strangers?*) Why was it so hard to make off—Dmitri Pavlovitch, do you like the role of chief tragedian, is that it? Or are you waiting perhaps to be invited on the sofa to make it up again.

"You can only say goodbye," he answered gravely. "And goodbye to you, Katya—Katerina Alexandrovna."

"Yes . . . Goodbye."

He felt suddenly like sobbing. "I'm going," he said awkwardly. Why had he said *that*. And how could a sparkle of tears look brighter after one had turned away . . .

Well, outside the stars shone very piercingly and cleanly over the ragged edges of trees: the sky was entirely clean. Notwithstanding which night-birds sang about as mournfully as usual. Going up the road Dmitri Pavlovitch raised his hand as if intent on wrenching at a few stars but what he would have really liked to touch was the invisible songs of birds.

JOURNEY

TYREE HORN MATHEWS

We enter life by path of pain.
We travel sorrow's anguished road.
In bitter frost of blackest night
We must unload our caravan
Alone.

O SAY CAN YOU SEE!

LEGARDE S. DOUGHTY

Like a Greek in a galley
Or a moth on a pale
I think of freedom
And I wish I had bail
From—they say it's a factory
But it's really a jail.

But this is where I work
And I work damn hard
For a little sack of flour
And a bucket of lard
And a ride Sunday evening
Up the boulevard.

I go to the window
For I hear a sound
Louder than the wheels
Where my life is ground
Into miles of sheeting
As the world turns round.

I stand by the window
And look down to the street
Where a polyglot of voices
And a thundering of feet
Make you think of war whoops
And of mad drums' beat.

Tramp, tramp, tramp,
"And we've got to have bread!"
Tramp, tramp, tramp,
"Or we'll soon be dead!"
And a bubbling and a rumbling;
That is all that's said.

So the lords get together,
The lords of politics,
And the lords of wealth,
And the lords of tricks:
"We've got to do something
To get out of this fix:

"For it's not good business
When 'most everybody lacks,
And poor old J. P. Mammon
Can't pay income tax,
And the starving men are rumbling;
And these are the facts.

O Say Can You See!—continued

“So we’ve got to take a look
And see which way to go
To help the unemployed
And the man with the hoe.”
(aside): “And most of all
To keep the Status Quo.”

And a jump and a job
And a thimbleful of pay.
And we buy a can of beans
And we shout “hooray!”
And the rich men chuckle
And the rich men play.

And we plow up our cotton
And take turns at the maul;
But we rob poor Peter
Just to pay poor Paul;
For the rich man’s portion
Still is nearly all.

And the poor man’s a worm
In his cocoon curled.
To the rich man’s music
He’s fuddled and he’s whirled—
Singing “God’s still the Dollar;
All’s right with the world.”

SOLILOQUY OF A DYING WOMAN

REHGE L. ROLLE

Yes . . . I have traveled very far, this life,
For there were many victories to win.
I learned to live for others—as a wife—
And learned to know true tolerance, through sin.
I had my share of power, which taught me poise;
Life wrecked my stately craft, to cure conceit.
Sometimes I failed to notice warning buoys,
And once the guy-ropes were encased in sleet.

Death is not final. There is more to gain,
So I must be reborn . . .

but not too soon!

This life has been so long, and yet so bare
Of aught but storms and learning and deep pain,
For though I often sighted the lagoon
Of happiness, I found no inlet there.

AMETHYST AND STEEL

LEO A. QUINN

Metropolitan Musing

i took the shuttle at times square to the grand central to get the 11:55 (p. m.) home . . . and there was weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth, and there was laboring, building and night club frolicing and several other things, which i have by this time (of course) forgotten . . . such as seeing a man with magnetic brown eyes in the central, who looked at me strangely (i being in the uniform of the civilian conservation corps)

washing made myself presentable, such as a shoe-shine and other essentials, and was eating lunch above in a self-service restaurant, when . . . (they had strawberries and cream, but much too expensive . . . everyone knows that in march)

the subways clanged and everything was raucous, and girls with smart bickering eyes, and with lips that had been in the public library and elsewhere . . . the place is so big at times that you feel quite like sinking to the pavement . . . i felt quite like sinking to the pavement several times . . . i wrote several things and other things afterward for books, magazines, anthologies and autograph-seekers . . . several times i felt quite like . . .

sinking to the pavement . . . such is san francisco, yes, such is new york, and even boise was thus . . . why, i cannot say . . .

circles (literary) being critical are never satisfied, expecting one who has written to be a god and other things, etc., which one can not possibly be . . .

i wonder if it is possible, my friends, that the little organist in the village has created something that will bring him lasting fame?

and girls with smart bickering eyes, and with lips that had been in the public library and elsewhere . . .

Mechanical Thorns and Roses

i am going down to the store now, mother, to get a . . . vague infinitude that encompasses the mind . . . or, see . . . that man has a strongly chiselled face . . . one that dreams arise from,

of brick buildings and poor artists, playing the rude song of the elements, with fauns and satyrs prancing, the carpenter laboring with lathe and planks, the sun beating strangely down, the birds spiraling about steeples tipping in heat waves,

the street lost in vague dust and reminiscently wandering into the country of trolls and ogres and goblins, where tiny houses have strange white curtains through which little inhabitants peep knowingly at passers-by in the night and in the noon and in the morning before the birds get up, and the street flags echoing conversation and laughter and talking loudly, while the laundry woman hangs out her spotless clothes and cavaliers peep from the dusty covers of history books . . .

loaf of bread that i have dug out of old manuscripts, stories, et cetera . . . before the birds get up, and the street flags echoing conversations of lovers and-so-forth that have passed in the night . . .

while the telephone wires mingle with the moon and the stars, there is no reason why the biology laboratory should be a boring place . . . and cavaliers peep from the covers of history books, now, frankly, is there . . .

The Marble Cup

the red roofs of the village are the mansions of the birds, their homes, their happy choirs . . .

as a rat moves in the dust of an ancient steeple, so move i today . . .

when the moon arises, round and flushed with love, i will stand on the steps of the pale temple, my arms extended—neglected . . .

i will hear the bird eternal in the fields and the locust of egypt in the deep woods of the new world . . .

i will frequent old barns, mossy with age, decaying and deserted now . . .

i will see thousands of small devils pour pots of pitch over lean white souls—my soul among them—my soul extended on a dark altar in a dank cave of sorrow . . .

roofs will totter and fall . . . the mansions of the birds will totter and fall . . . castles of the mind will stand firm though dizzily . . .

rankly will roll the rivers through the thin green reeds . . .

thus will all be when i am dead . . .

phantoms will walk, dropping tears of dust in the cave of sorrow

Amethyst and Steel—continued

and like a trilling in the mountain rocks, the marble cupid will sing . . .

thus will all be when i am dead . . .

Coins, Cocoanuts, and Jackdaws

there are certain, i say, there are certain, incipient, hard-bitten critics who harass the gentle author's soul with pattering monologues of heat and fright, and scare the public into proclaiming deathless things, which come in the shape of letters: all about the civil war and tennyson, keats, shelley and others

(quite often in the manner of the slim, slanting hiss, and others who move their lips softly, automatically, as in a trance that articulates everything and nothing, while the moon arises over an antiquely shattered hill the sun has blushed upon and the sphinx talked to

(when it could talk and move (ponderously, achingly) burning with pent-up desire (like virgil) for beauty, food, means, lines and stanza-separation, that meant food, life and a desperate urge for other things (like trees) which i shan't go into here as it would take too long)

well, anyway, there are certain incipient critics who do, say and do, what is mannerless to the clerk, editor, carpenter and mason (behind regular pyramids of brick, behind regular stacks of cement bags (huge, meaningless) with mortar-board, trowel, chimneys to build on a saturday morning) or the tailor behind stacks of clothing (new, and to-be-mended) the bootblack, the steeplejack, the priest, organist and poet (bitterly, fervently chewing his nails in the attic, where severe monologues of silence coming out of the cracks in the wall, floor, ceiling and windows) . . .

bitterly, fervently chewing his nails in the attic.

Samples of Decrepit Memory

grotesqueries prance about on snow-white steeds, knowing little of home or day, or of night that bears black wreaths for white fore-heads of steel or iron in the stream of life . . .

but knowing these, i prance about with the grotesqueries, and wink at the various flowers that grow there and here and there . . .

and knowing these in various gardens at night, where there is a moon and a star, a repetition of the above theme seizes my heart

with hands of steel and eats it, and the moon and the star and the moon and the star, and eats them . . .

and a shoe of silence seizes the throat quite violently in white, but the stream is placid with death and the lawgiver, mooses, who sayeth even yet what he said then and now . . .

and the shoe of silence is a pantomime of forgetfulness and forgotten information that steals drowsily over the senses . . . yes, it is true; yes, it is quite true . . .

mrs. jones is dead and the grocery store king regains control of his own home . . . monger of scandal, avast . . . the symphony is ended in steel silence . . . the amethyst is for your wife who thinks more rapidly than you down main street . . .

but this is a melodious chuckle of words and it ends here where i see in dead silence . . . the dead silence of the grocery store king (whose name appears weekly on three hundred thousand store advertising circulars) . . .

but "thrug-thrug," call the frogs and the crickets . . . "thrug-thrug," call the things that lisp at night . . . but as i say, it is ended . . . no longer can i say that you mow the lawn or that i am not . . .

trees wring their hands and applaud wildly . . . something says, "i will wring their necks as the brisk wind beheads the smoke of the chimney" . . . but this fails in its attempts and once more is placid on all the faces of existence . . .

THE WILES OF WIND

HAROLD KERR

Let last year's lover move among the trees.
He will be no miser of his memories.
He has learned with sorrow certain nudities
Awaiting bush and branch and bough.
He knows the wiles of wind, and how
Eventually a veined thing forgets a vow.

Now he knows that it was good—
In that light moment before the rude
Wreckage of winter thundered on the wood—
That summer vanish airily in the west.
He knows, despite his pain, a breath had best
Blow down the bitter verdure in his breast.

A PRISONER'S PRAYER

ALEX R. SCHMIDT

When I still held the franchise of a peer,
And the emancipation of the birds
Was no more thing for wonder
Than the stream's sea-flowing
Or the tree's sky-yearning arms,
Mine was the pulsing thought, so palpable
That it was faith (now faith is obsolete),
That God alone could call me to account.

As fully hidden from the face of God
As Acheron from the Elysian sun,
My prayer is to a less sinful fellow,
Who, by chance, in a fleece-lined robe ennobled,
Can swing the grated gate and let death in,
For he has power over life and death:

Man of my clay, my heart-beats and my fears,
If as a small boy you saw grinning gnomes
In shadows when you brought the cattle home,
On the benighted trail;
If with dry throat,
You paced in dread until the fever passed
And life's sweet waters flowed on as before;
If into your sequestered, padded day
Doom raised his hand and pounded on the door,
The while you prayed, as you stood naked there,
Helpless in all your perquisites and rights,
That the lock held; if you can sense the dread
Of man for the unknown; pity me now.
In my steel cell I hear the rasping waves
Of the black sea of death grate on the shore
Of life. Give me the right to give my life.

I who am now in hell can fear no hell,
Justice cannot be served because each hour
I die and live and die and live again:
Each waking moment death is by my side;
It is not mercy that the meanest life
Should die a thousand deaths.

With one pen stroke
Give judgment so that death may enter in,
And I shall bless you for this visitor.

The city and the hour before the dark
Have grown around this graveyard through the years,
And both are faithful now—the night, the city,
Close to the hill impermanently sacred,
Men and the shadow of the sun. Within,
The evening that wheels in across the mountains
On dusky, deadening arms, has found a home,
Here in the weed-grown plots, to settle panting,
Full of the sunset life, the broad Pacific
Wind from the west.

One dusk, Maryan and Karl
Moved like a pair of shadows through the gates
And wandered hand on hand among the graves.
The grey stone plaques, facing the splendor of the
Heavens, glowed like dead eyes fronting fire.
Only the breath of years has touched this spot,
Effacing here a letter, there a date,
And narrowing with its grass the mournful paths,
And yet the dull weeds and the twisted cypress
Seem of an age younger than these reminders
Set over dust-calm parcels in the nineties.

Men have built clustering houses round this hill,
Knotting the air with sounds once strange, now common,
Almost dear and typical: the hum
Of rubber whirling on the hard-packed tar;
The slamming of strained doors; the hushed, quaint talk
Of strollers after dark.

The old leaves danced
Like ghastly, songless birds, torn from their stems;
A bottle holding three geraniums
Turned in the current, clattered, and lay spilled.
A gust of petals whirling up the slope
Swam in an eddy round a broken shrine
And filtered one by one between the bars,
To flutter as if exhausted at the feet
Of a cracked crucifix.

Maryan—continued

Then Maryan
Looked to the heavens and was silent, calm
As a saint thinking on God before a
Cross. What had been born in her like love
Only the tall hills hidden from the towns
By virtue of their height, and manly stasis,
Knew or would ever know. She walked there often,
Speaking her heart where words died with the speaking,
Striding along the summits of the range
That clove the farmlands from the sea and clipped
The winds scudding from China.

“Look at me,”
Said Karl beside her touching the poised arm,
“What is a sky that it should claim you always,
You who have lips? When have we loved, like this,
I on the earth, you in a star flown burning
Planet past planet?”

Maryan turned, her foot
Scratching the gravel of the path. “Up there,
Close to the clouds, higher than you, is love.
All that you need is here, something to be
Held to the heart one moment in the night,
Sipped of and sweetened, tasted on your couch,
The fragment of a perfume to be spilt.
But something stronger than the ground, than you,
Pulls me away.”

Above the hill of graves,
Miles to the west, upon the heaven-drawn line
Of sea-dusk and the darkness, roared a motor
Pulling an airplane blackly through the sky.
The twin steel towers of a wireless station
Off to the north, sent flashes of white power
Into ethereal space between them, while their tips
Glowed with a red eye staunchly and aloof,
Feet in the soil and fixed with time forever.

One moment, heart-split, of eternity—
An age of living to a man.

She seemed
Nothing of him, nothing of earth, part of the
Unseen beauty of the air, the spark
Leaving the steel, the blue-white gleam beside
The metal's sudden electricity.

Across the bay the ships moved. On the hills
Lights wavered and winked. The sunset deepened
Into the steadiness of night. Around them
Grass whispered and waved. He sank before her,
Hands holding her body to his face;
Into him crept the sweetness of her skin,
The soft and rhythmic motions of her being.

Maryan heard the wind tearing the leaves,
The whistle of the air about the stones,
The rustle of the insects in the ground.
She felt the warm breath of his mouth pressed close,
The cold breath of the sea upon her throat.
Far off, the city and the night kept faith.
Nearer her lay a decade of the dead.

Icons of love have twisted in the stone
Oftener than an idol in the flesh.
The dim cathedrals of a hope have waited
Year onto year the miracles of art
Turning to nature after prayer. One mass,
One brief renewal of one dream, are all
We look for in the church of many days.

She kneeled beside him, kissing the rough hair,
Talking alone, it seemed, in the whole world,
Much as a nurse will ease a patient's whims.
Out of the moment, nothing that was new.
Only the sadness common to such hills,
The broad bay winds, the city, and the night.

TWO POEMS

WELDON GINIGER

I

I stood aloof
and contemplated this man,
this man who rested in God.
And the gloomy shroud of my unbelief
fell from me bit by bit.

Oh, the pain!
As tho my very flesh were being shed
in long tender strips
from these bones
which for so long had supported them.

And as I stood,
so aloof and contemplative,
my flesh resurrected itself
and the delicious pain was lost
in the warmth of my shroud.

II

The figure on the cross
slowly raised its head.
"Forgive me, o my father,
that I knew not
what I sought to do.
'Twas vanity of vanity
led me
to assume the guise of men.—"

The first thief spoke,
"What mumblest thou, Jew?
Shouldst conserve thy strength
for the centurion
who breaks the bones of the crucified."

The figure answered not, only,
"Forgive me, o my father,
that I knew not
what I sought to do."

He was an old Negro who had lived a long time
In the shack just back of his church.
He was a Baptist, but always wore a priest's collar
Of celluloid.
His old-fashion steel-rimmed glasses had extension temples
Which often got out of fix
And allowed the glasses to slide down his nose
When he was preaching.
His name was Noah Bones,
But most of his congregation called him Uncle Norah.
Most white folks addressed him as Reverend,
Some in ribaldry and some respectfully,
But he liked the title and always smiled when he heard it.
Noah Bones was an upright Negro and a good man.
He was growing old,
But during the week he would take odd jobs within the limit of his strength
And do them well.
He never monkeyed around the young yellow girls in his church
Nor visited wives when their husbands were away.
His living was meagre
Because his flock was small and poor,
And giving money to the Lord was like pulling eye teeth.
But Reverend raised a garden in the summer
And did his own cooking because his wife was dead.
He was a great exhorter and lambasted sin like hell,
Snorting like a war-horse sometimes when he got all het up.
About twice a year he would have to make a drive for funds
And he would call on white folks with his scrawled list,
Always respectful, and with his hat in his hand.
Scarcely anyone turned him down.
The donations he received ran from a dime to a dollar bill
And he was grateful for all of them.
He would get clear off the pavement, if necessary, to let a white person
pass,
Always with uncovered head, and a smile.
He died in the pulpit one day just after he had said "Amen."
To show you what the town thought of Reverend
They held his funeral in the white folk's church
And a white minister preached the sermon.
The choir sang "Roll, Jordan, Roll" and "Home Over There",
And everyone agreed
There was a new black angel in heaven.

SAVING GRACES

JO HARTMAN

Let there be rain
and shrieking winter winds,
a jangle of phone calls
to interrupt my beauty ritual,
a visit from the neighbor woman
who comes to borrow eggs and chatter about
the inconsequential pains of child-bearing—
inconsequential to me because I
shall never have them again;
then, lastly, let that venerable and ubiquitous
benefactor of the family drop in
for (the now unprepared) supper . . .
all to the end that I may be forced to remain indoors
and not steal out into the moon-drenched night
to meet you.
O I shall be agonized of soul and turbulent of body
as I act the charmed hostess
but you, my Lover, not knowing and left waiting
at our rendezvous,
will think I am a proud woman
and difficult to win.

PLEDGE

JANET ANDREWS RICHISON

Take no shallow wine-glass for the quaff,
Than wine a richer brew;
Widest, deepest, would not hold it, half—
The distilled honeydew;
Lift a loving-cup, look up and laugh;
And I will drink with you.

Dear eyes, do not look downward; even first taste
The cup leaves not quite filled;
And tremulous, too eager hands can waste
The fragrant well, unwilling;
Yet, yet, how shall we halt our happy haste,
Though precious drops be spilled?

Adorable, a quaff for us I pour;
But O, let both forbear
To watch the cup grow less full than before—
The failing sweetness there;
We'll drink together till there is no more;
Then break it in despair!

"YOU TRIED TO CAPTURE A RAINBOW"

By Norma Mark

Norma Mark is a twenty-four year old student at Columbia. She is profoundly interested in Archeology, which doesn't prevent her from writing short stories, just as her history course in high school didn't prevent her from writing a novel there—though it did succeed in making her flunk the history course. She has appeared in Windsor Quarterly, New Talent, Kosmos, and other advance guard magazines. Miss Mark lives in Brooklyn, N. Y.

POOLS bound in the fastness of light carried into darkness through the blindness of time—*blindness of time* echoed persistently. It were as if a drill machine bored words and words. Still, he felt no coercion in the poetic simulation. His fingers roved across the keys. White keys. Black keys. He thought that the buoyant notes floated and ended abruptly in green pools, slimy ones. His body swayed to the mood of sounds. The room was cold. Heavy drapes and gilt furniture couldn't make it warm. On the floor at his feet lay a silver sheened rug with a black band. He saw that where the silver blended into the colors of the lights, the black glistened but never merged. Pools could be like soap bubbles, iridescent, frothy. Couldn't they?

—thousands of years ago I was in the unborn; in the grey welled sands of the to be; in the soft pudgy womb of a female; still, perhaps it was only last night and from out that dark dissonance a parade of future skeletons passed me by—

The wind struck against the panes but he didn't hear. He wondered if such a thing as simpleness existed. Wherever he had gone it was I-I-I and he had tired of it. The idiot on the corner, whose head wagged from side

to side, was his inspiration, for it could not think, not even of the hated I. His fingers shook as they touched the keys. First he struck a note, high, and the verberation was chilled, distinctly bell like. The room felt colder. It were as if ice suddenly spread about, slowly enveloped all things, crusted even the candle flame whose bluish tip quivered and became less blue in the blue ice. The ice closed in . . . crept into his fingers . . . closed in . . . trickled along his spine . . . closed in.

His ear caught the notes as they came from the instrument. The brilliance of sound had caught into his spirit and his eyes swam. He had taken light from darkness. The black band on the rug seemed isolated—like an opal flashing by itself under poor illumination. From out of some obscure world a black stone had fallen into a destiny and it was not in mortal hands to return it. The night before death had visited him with rouged lips and naked breasts. He had kissed her, flamed his lips with deathly hope. Her bony fingers erased logic, thought; caressed langour and desire. In the sensuous torpor he floated in rhythm.

"You Tried to Capture a Rainbow. . ."—continued

... When you were a boy, don't you recall? Those shaded walks through green fields and how you wept because the green was fading and how you wanted to throw yourself on the ground and become covered with dew. Why is it so hard for you to recollect? . . .

He bent his head low over his chest. Something was wrong. Something which he had found—he had lost; and he couldn't tell whether the loss was vital or not. Whirling bodies on a dance floor had twisted him about; the odor of perfume had made him dizzy; the low backed gowns of women had shown him that powdered flesh could be hideous. He thought of all these things with a kind of helpless passivity; as if the world had wanted him to be something and then forgot what it was. Only the ugly little room reacted, for her floors rumbled at the crescendos. In the piano, middle C squeaked, but it was a friendly squeak and he didn't mind.

... You were tired that day and you wanted to go and lie under the Elm in your yard. But you had to stay in your stuffy room and play; while outside the sun sent long shadows across your lawn and you wanted to drench your face in molten hot sunbeams. But you were imprisoned and then you were thirsty and your parched throat craved the chill of pink lemonade with lots of ice in it. Then your body became hot and you wanted to leap into the Well, all naked, not caring if you drowned and you thought it would be nice to drown in the ice cold waters of the Well, and the room grew stuffier . . .

HE left the cold and went into torrid. A thrill coursed through him when he found the ice melt, leave slush and dribbles of water. The opal grew and slowly the blotch of black on the rug began to expand. Vapour rose from the floor. His eyes burned but his face was pale. He walked within the vale of darkness and his naked body glowed with illuminating lusty black. Like a diamond, his body sparkled, danced

and settled into a midnight pool. It became a drop of jet which tossed into still silent worlds.

... And that time you lay in the hay with her, remember? You had been so shy and frightened, but she soon showed you how beautiful it could be and the heat which started in your head and passed downward until you buried your face in her breasts and let her undo your clothing and you forgot to be ashamed, remember? You had found something then and thought it was love until love came . . .

He stopped a moment, stared at the keyboard, raised his head and sighed. He had wanted to be something once. If only he knew what it was. Without music, the room seemed frugal, as if the splendid adornments were merely gold dust which would crumble into ashen fragments. The weight of the guilt bore him down. The room became a blur. Once again he placed his fingers on the keyboard. Soft music poured from him. He was alone. Alone in the room with nothing animate except the piano—that lived. He had devoted most of his childhood to it. The tones seemed to twist in circles, in shimmering pools. He saw lights merge into one, totter and tremble with wavelike repetition. That first night on the Podium . . . he quivered. It was so long ago. He had never forgotten the fear. Outside the wind whistled. Queer obligato . . .

... That winter in Cuba, the time you were ill. Why didn't you die? Then—not now. You had wanted to die and couldn't, something in the bright sunlight and sparkling ocean wouldn't let you—and the music from the cafe heated you and on your balcony you began to sing—and then you wanted to live and did—remember? . . .

Somehow the thoughts which drifted through his head were somber, of frustrations, antithesis to the music he played. All he remembered of his life was that it had begun at the piano.

That a very small boy had sighed once when he wanted to play in the streets and couldn't. When he wanted to roll himself in clean muddy dirt and couldn't. His body had grown long and his fingers longer. There clung to him an air which was almost tragic, pathetic to the extent of humbleness. A bell rang. The phone. He answered it, putting his lips very close to the mouth-piece. He spoke a few moments and hung the receiver up. Why had he been maudlin polite? Why had he answered it? He walked to the window and looked out. Far down was the ocean. It looked gruesome in the bleak light of late afternoon. Deep mounds of green-grey waters hurtled themselves against the shore.

"Only miserable illusions could sprout from sources like that," he thought, and jerked the shade down. He lit electric lights and watched the glow of the candle die.

—thirty-one years . . . thirty-one years . . .
thirty-one years . . . and all's well—

There would be no moon tonight, no spectral ray to cling to the gilt piano. It would be a dull night, heavy, and electric lights would blaze.

—there was a jewelled lake and beside it a hotel and beside it a museum and he had lived three nights in the hotel and the first night he looked into the museum and saw glistening marble walls of a white brilliance and in the center of the hall stood a long marble slab which looked grey under the light and on the second night frothy hoods rose from the lake and iridescent bubbles floated in various colors and in the museum shone a warm orange light and on the slab was a body being embalmed by two girls and a boy and the girls were red-cheeked and beautiful and the boy's hair was a flood of black shining curls while his face was unearthly pale and on the third night magic lights played upon the jewelled lake and sweet music was in the air and in the museum one girl lay half-embalmed on the slab and only one girl and the boy were left and he had not stayed to see more but fled that night—

. . . You had fallen in love but then you knew you would. And you weren't surprised, not even thrilled, because you had expected it. Love had come late. Walked in one morning in orchid and white and asked you to buy books. And how you loved. It hadn't lasted very long. Remember? She kissed you one night, hard, and you felt her teeth. Then she kissed you again and left . . .

HE walked over to the piano and leaned against it, pressed his cheek to its side. It felt cool and smooth. "We are old friends, aren't we?" he muttered. "Awful old friends" he smiled. "Just like that old sea way out there even if it does keep pounding and pounding and won't stop. Once I was out there in that sea and because some people were afraid the boat might sink, I played. But we didn't sink. I had played through the night. In the morning my full dress clung to me soaked with sweat."

. . . The day you tried to capture a rainbow, when you were sixteen, and set it to music. How eagerly you had sat down with your head filled with radiant ethereal stuff, and when sweet music but of the earth came forth you had rushed from the piano in anger; all because you couldn't blend the tinted colors into tinted music. Remember?
. . .

Once more he sat down. Under his touch the room became mobile. In some corner a clock ticked.

—we saw a bridge once, a friend and I, a bridge made from cloud stuff, with beautiful lines stretching into silver grey fog and we saw trains rush across, heard their rumble, and so my friend and I began to cross this bridge and we walked on a narrow ledge overhanging an abyss but we grew tired as we walked and wanted to return but the bridge was one way so we groped painfully letting our bodies suspend into the abyss and by great difficulty did we begin to return and soon a boat passed us all lit up as for excursion with much deck dancing and we hailed it and it sank beneath the waters in that dank abyss and we saw bubbles churn and by great effort we reached ground and on further thought I believed the boat was piloted by Charon and the bridge was infinity—

The music became louder. He stopped, slammed the piano cover down with a bang and ran to the window. The wind moaned. Sand was beaten into soggy holes by the unabated sea. He stared, listened to the noise. The sea played upon the sand—the sand whirled to the wind—the wind blew hoarsely.

"Let them finish the symphony, I'm free", he thought. Snatching on his coat he ran into the wet, lowered his head from the salt spray and headed towards a street car. "Let them finish the symphony, I'm through . . . free."

UNDERTAKER

LYDIA C. PRESCOTT

"Think not disdainfully of death, but look on it with favour; for even death is one of the things that Nature wills."—Marcus Aurelius.

I go alone into the houses of sorrow
I walk humbly into that space
Where time is no longer time
But where worlds begin and end
And begin again.
The halls are dark and full of stillness,
But I am unafraid
For I am one familiar with the shadow
That falls upon all men.
My profession is an honorable one
Old as the stones of Egypt's pyramids.
I am proud and my loneliness is terrible
Within me.

Who has seen in the flames of the fire
The lives of the dead,
And the faces of those remembered only
In dreams or in the withered time;
Who has remembered the tired women
Weary unto death,
Those wasted away in sickness,
Those who they say "die before their time"
And those of whom they murmur "Their time has come."
Who has doctored and tended the body
After the soul is fled,
Who has prepared not the living for the dead,
But rather the dead for those who live;
And whose task is performed
Always in the darkest hour.

II.

The snow crisp and dry
Upon the fields . . . the quiet fields . . .
And the fierce stars . . .
("You'd better drive slowly, the roads—"
"Thank you Doctor.")
And the wind like a hungry wolf
With bared white teeth
Snapping at, shuffling at the windows . . .
The crunch of the wheels
In the ruts of the farmyard . . .
The lights in the windows
And one window dark . . .

And the country people who sit in their sheepskins
Around the stove,
Silent, dull in the warm kitchen
Who wait when there is no need to wait,
Who watch when the vigil is over,
Whose feet in their thick boots
Are clumsy and large,
Helpless in the presence of death.

"It is the best way to go,
Suddenly and without fear—
Yes, it is the best way . . ."
And the women with numbness in their eyes
Holding desperately to the straw
Which is Today,
Dreading the dark waters of Tomorrow.

"Poor Jules," she said
Drawing back the sheet,
"Poor dear" and she patted
The flushed face of him
Who had so suddenly
And by shock departed from this world.

And I moving about alone in the small room
Working as a surgeon does upon a man anaesthetized,
But in my mind the thought:
"He will awaken to no pain,
What he has been in life
That only does he leave behind."
And I wondered what his life had been,
And as I worked, the flushed look disappeared—
Lying upon the pillow he seemed to say:
"At last I have found eternal rest."

And when they came to look at him
They said:
"He looks beautiful,
Just like he was asleep."
And the tears were in their eyes,
And there was gratitude,
And I walked quietly away
And left them mourning for their dead.

III.

Sultry summer night . . .
The tall trees lashed and twisted
In the storm . . .
And the skies split open
With enormous cracks of light . . .
Thunder like the rolling of black iron balls
Along empty passages of air . . .
A broken dam and the roar of waves rushing in . . .
The rumble of the death cart over the cobblestones . . .
Men and women in their dark houses
Tossing restlessly, staring into space,
Listening for the rain to come . . .

In the early morning
Through the littered streets
Strewn with the branches
And the flattened leaves . . .
And the rain drizzling . . .
Into the peeling house where the pale children
Play listlessly tired of being kept indoors . . .
And the carpet worn threadbare
On the creaking boards . . .

He did not choose to live,
He found no other way—
No lands to set in order,
No will for him to draw,
No explanation, no excuses,
No regrets—nothing—Nothing
except one cartridge
And one gun.

And I covered up the bruises where he fell,
Camouflaged all marks of violence,
Wiped away the blood
And blackened powder stains,
Arranged the body that he threw away
And gave him all the semblance
Of a dignity he did not feel.

And my heels were quiet on the wooden stair,
And the wife like a little sparrow
With bright eyes, brave with the courage
Of one who has dealt with foes far worse
Than death: with poverty and sickness
And despair, laid a small claw-like hand
Upon my arm and told me
How it happened.

And while she talked, the children came in
With boxes of flowers saying:
"May we open these?"
And "Where can we find a vase?"

IV.

I have seen the crumpled form
Of an only son hideously mangled
In an accident,
A boy of twenty with a love of speed,
And there was no answer
To my "why?" as I tried to hide
Disfigurement and violent death.
And I felt like a poor make-up artist
Trying to fit him for a part he could not play,
Trying to disguise him
Not in the character of someone else
But rather as himself,
The boy he used to be.
And I lifted him carefully
Into his casket
And turned his battered face away
Concealing the ravage of his death;
And I put a white gardenia
In his buttonhole, he that was once
So gay and debonair, and I thought:
"White flowers are for the boys
Who die young and valley lilies
Are the tears I cannot weep."

But his mother said:
"This is not my son!
O this is not *my* son!"
And the sound of her cry
Followed me even into the regions
Of my sleep.

V.

I go alone into the houses of sorrow
Always among the people who are left behind,
Among strange people who do not know me,
Who do not know the sound of my voice
Or the tread of my footsteps upon the stair.
I go where there is only weeping and sadness
And the drawn shade.
My symbol, the black tie,
My stripe; the black band of crepe,
I am proud and my loneliness is terrible
Within me.

TRYST

TAMARA ANDREEVA

"Yan Kuei Fei lived in the time of the Tang dynasty (618-905), was mistress of the Imperial court and of the court poet, Li Po."—Chinese History

In the morning, when the air was golden,
And white peacocks screamed in moist grasses,
The autumn clouds bathed in sleepy pools.

Kuei Fei fastened her bejewelled sandals,
Wrapped herself in perfumed silk
And ran into dusk.

There, the willows were swaying softly,
There the yellow leaves were falling—
Falling, gently falling
In the blue and sleepy pools.

In the palace of lacquered columns
The air was swimming with incense,
The air was tremulous with sound
Of a brass palatial gong.

Outside the dawn was pierced
With the wailing of bamboo flute.
"Li Po," screamed the white peacocks,
"Li Po," cracked powdered coral of the path.

The flute sang of infinite sorrow.
Kuei Fei's longing fingers
Parted the billowing dusk.

Her eyelids fluttered.
"Beloved," breathed Li Po from his ambush,
"You come to me like a Yellow Cloud!"

VIRGIN

GOLDIE HAFFNER

A virgin
Is a tightly packed haystack
In which no one has rolled.

Walt Whitman

Democracy's Laureate

By Ruth A. Samuel

Miss Samuel is we think our youngest contributor to date. Aged nineteen, she is a recent high school graduate, but, as the following critical estimate illustrates, possesses an acumen beyond her years. Her aim is for perfection in the literary essay. Miss Samuel lives in Pittsburgh, Penna.

Before the happy advent of Walt Whitman upon the American literary horizon, American poetry was rather congenitally anaemic, and obviously inadequate for coping with the new order. The weakness—inherited from British forefathers (the Purple Peers of Poesy) and due to constant intermarriage—was rendering the royal stock ineffectual; senility was practically its birthmark. New blood was needed.

Around about the eighteen-fifties, Whitman grew to poethood and married his Muse. With the first post-natal cry of the full-blooded progeny of this union, the death-rattle sounded in the throats of the Longfellows, the Bryants, the Lowells, the Thoreaus, and other venerable literary grandfathers who were remembered by the new generation fondly, but with youth's instinctive condescension. The old order had definitely changed.

The First American Poet was an egoist. A man first, then an American, Walt Whitman was a poet last of all, which was fortunate for his poetry. He did not adhere to the dilettante idea of "art for art's sake". With him it was art for life's sake, and one of the first things he did was to remove the borrowed tuxedo from American literature,

and dress it in comfortable working-clothes. He insisted in his right to use commonplace speech in verse and took the prerogative of writing authentic poetry which was neither rhymed nor metred. With this revolutionary step, he successfully cleared, for grateful succeeding poets, a path through the underbrush of wordy-ostentation and the obstructing growth of the conventional iambus.

It was his renunciation of the poet's sacred right to bestrew the reader's vision with rhetorical flowers, that so outraged orthodox rhymesters here and abroad. Whitman's sin was to call a spade a spade; but it was the man's audacity in making his spade poetic that aroused, in pale-handed aesthetes, the desire to damn him to everlasting purgatory. England's Stevenson, impeccable in his literary etiquette, gently scored Democracy's Laureate for using "the word 'hatter' in a lyrical apostrophe."

"It may be," he primly apologized, "very wrong and very wounding to a respectable branch of industry, but the word 'hatter' cannot be used seriously in emotional verse; not to understand this is to have no literary tact . . . It is because he is a Democrat that Whitman

Walt Whitman—continued

must have in the hatter. If you say Admiral, he reasons, why may you not say Hatter?"

And why may you not, indeed? If Whitman's hatter was too coarse for this purist's palate, one wonders what Langston Hughes's sensitively poetic "Brass Spittoons" would have done to his digestion?

Whitman believed in the omnipotence of the present. He recognized the wisdom of letting the dead die. He did not eulogize ghosts. In his "Song of the Exposition", he said:

*Come, Muse, migrate from Greece
and Ionia;*

*Cross out, please, those immensely
overpaid accounts,*

*That matter of Troy, and Achilles'
wrath, and Eneas', Odysseus' wan-
derings;*

*Placard "Removed" and "To Let" on
the rocks of your snowey Parnas-
sus;*

*Repeat at Jerusalem—place the notice
high on Jaffa's gate and Mount
Moriah;*

*The same on the walls of your Gothic
European Cathedrals, and German,
French and Spanish Castles;*

*For know a better, fresher, busier
sphere—a wide, untried domain
awaits, demands you.*

And he tells the bards hoary in spirit
or in locks—

*. . . I can hear what maybe you do not
—a terrible aesthetical commotion,
With howling, desperate gulp of
"flower" and "bower",*

*With "Sonnet to Matilda's Eyebrow"
quite, quite frantic;*

*With gushing, sentimental reading
circles turned to ice or stone;*

With many a squeak, (in metre

*choice,) from Boston, New York,
Philadelphia, London . . .*

Whitman did not desire "gushing" reading circles as audience. His was a literature "of the people, by the people and for the people." His was no morocco-bound, vellum-paged sheaf to be leisurely perused in scented boudoirs.

His meaning was so deep, so all-embracing, so manifestly sincere that it is a continual source of wonder that he could effectively use so complex a language as the English to suggest, as powerfully as he did, the pattern of his thought. A few deft touches, a few bold strokes and the man, Walt Whitman, was revealed in all his strength and glory.

Whitman's Democracy was founded upon men and women born of the womb of homely America where nobility and royalty meant—not blue-blooded lineage—but red-blooded spirit; and his democracy extended to banker, plower and prostitute. His national anthem was the conglomerate song of the machine, the gin, the plow, the locomotive, the ferry, the anvil, the furnace, the gusher, the coal-drill. He was an incurable idealist, it is true, but so was the Nazarene.

Whitman was deeply religious, but his beliefs sprang from his heart, were the blood, bone and tissue of him. "Alone, and identity and the mood—and the soul emerges, and all the statements, churches, sermons, melt away like vapors . . . Bibles may convey, and priests expound, but it is exclusively for the noiseless operations of one's isolated self, to enter the pure ether of veneration, reach the divine levels and commune with the unutterable."

The native, unalloyed honesty of the man was startling:

*I hear, he said, and behold God in
every object yet understand God
not in the least,*

*Nor do I understand who there can
be more wonderful than myself
And nothing, not God, is greater to
one than one's self.*

Just how great that self was, he set forth in his incomparable "Song of Myself"—pagan music played upon an old church organ!

For lack of a more adequate term, one speaks of Whitman's prodigious "morality", but one dislikes the word. Through long association with Mrs. Grundy, morality smells, suffocatingly, of chloroform, and smacks of spiritual strangulation. Nothing even remotely suggestive of constraint can be fairly associated with the "Good Gray Poet", and yet his morality was so complete and intrinsic as to "balk account". He was a queer mixture of the purely physical and the purely spiritual. Soul and body were one to him, one superlatively beautiful entity. His body was a continual source of naive awe and wonder to Whitman. In painting his word-pictures of the human form, the poet was charmingly disarming in his candor and utter lack of self-consciousness. Absorbed in the frankly voluptuous enjoyment of physical beauty, the whole fabric of his thought was ecstatically pure; and he succeeded, in a rush of words, in conveying his delight to his reader. He was above shame of nakedness and sex; he bathed in their hot suns and grew robust.

He was offensive—to bigots. Fastidious Philistines, brought face to face with his wholesome lack of inhibitions, squirmed like self-conscious adolescents. Lymph-filled moralists, shivering under a sparse covering of spirituality, raised

respectable brows at what was variously termed his "charlatanism", "infamy", "sacrilege", "pernicious carnalism". Democracy's laureate, however, continued "to lean and loaf and invite his soul."

"I am sane and sensual to the core," he said.

The bard was human to the core, too, and therefore not infallible. Even the most rabid of the "Whitmaniacs" will not deny that he has written some verse which, in the strictest sense, is not poetry, and some verse which is not poetry by the most extreme stretch of the imagination. Whitman wrote a few unhappy poems that conformed to the conventional standards set by the accepted English bards. Every school child is, sooner or later, assigned the task of committing the nicely metred verses of "O Captain, My Captain" which was his most unfortunate attempt to corset his literary form in concession to fashionable belles-lettres. There is, however, such a wealth of the authentic Whitman that such lapses can be easily overlooked.

Walt Whitman was a literary Topsy: "He wasn't born, he just grewed." He sat at no one's feet, but stood on his own, and was as varied, as fruitful, as full of resource, as life itself. His democracy exceeded the bounds of political sophistry; his religion transcended precept and dogma; his morality consisted in more than learned-to-the-letter copy-book ethics. His poetry was as free and untrammelled as wind or sea, neither of which confine their voices to rhymed iambs.

Walt Whitman was a living microcosm; he contained all America!

Truncations

*'The time has come,' the Walrus said,
'To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings.'*

—LEWIS CARROLL

Our readers will note in the present issue that we have made the addition of several pages of advertising. This we are doing in following out a policy of constant expansion which has enlarged us from a magazine of twenty-two pages in the initial Summer issue of 1931 to a magazine now of over twice that number of pages. The addition of short stories and pictorial features are only two of the advances we have made in making FANTASY a more desirable magazine, and all this while never losing our identity as primarily a poetry quarterly. The addition of new features has always meant additional pages, never a curtailment of original material—so that now, in addition to our poetry readers, we have added many who take first interest in our prose. The question of commercialism always appears when one speaks of advertisements. To this we readily agree, *except when the nature of the advertisements is such that they become an intrinsic part of the magazine*. This we believe is what we have accomplished. Here we wish only to say that every advertisement appearing in this FANTASY has been personally solicited (not by an agent who wishes to obtain advertising of any sort, his eye trained only on commissions) because the product advertised is something which is of interest to our readers as a literary group, whether they are inclined towards poetry volumes, limited editions, fine bindings, or books in general. These advertisers are enabling us to publish a better FANTASY. With this issue already we are adding eight pages, and expect to find it possible to make further additions from time to time. We are certain that you as readers of FANTASY, and as workers with it for all that it represents, will support our advertisers whenever possible, so that they

may continue to support us . . . We failed to mention in our last Ben Musser's appointment as poet laureate of New Jersey. And now hard upon it comes the news of the Presidency of the Washington Catholic Poetry Society. Self-preservation, very likely, since in his official capacity Ben will now be unable to dissect the anonymous poems of the members . . . Kerker Quinn and three brother editors announce a new one that appears beyond compare—*Direction*, published Box 555, Peoria, Ill. We haven't yet been privileged to examine a copy but the prospectus appears splendid—modeled after the old *Dial* . . . Demyan Bedny, the popular poet, was said to be the richest man in Russia for a time. And a poet! . . . Our apologies to *Westward's* editor, Kent Goodnough Hyde, who is not a *Mr.* as we said but a *Miss* . . . *Vesper*, Henry Picola, editor, runs all poetry, 966 E. 25th Street, Paterson, N. J. . . . And *Scope* is a new proletarian magazine, prose and verse, 120 West 28th Street, Bayonne, N. J. . . . *Caravel* is a new poetry magazine published at 783 Lawrence Street, Lowell, Mass. Editors Garrigan and Largay, lately out of high school, are now to my knowledge the youngest editors of a poetry magazine. Charles Henri Ford was for a time the most youthful of editors but, when his experimental *Blues* passed out, relinquished that doubtful honour to your present writer. We now stand superseded by Messrs. Garrigan and Largay. But don't let youth dissuade you. These fellows are good . . . Don't confuse this *Caravel* with the one published at Bonanova 17, Genova, Majorca, Spain . . . And our opinion still remains that poetry's greatest enemy is the professional reader . . . All praise to Erskine Caldwell, the only writer of fiction the picture interests couldn't buy.

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UNDERNEATH THE BOUGH

"In the name of common sense, Mr. Pendennis", Shandon asked, "what have you been doing—praising one of Mr. Bacon's books? . . ."

Pen's eyes opened with wide astonishment. "Do you mean to say", he asked, "that we are to praise no books that Bacon publishes: or that, if the books are good, we are to say they are bad?"

—THACKERAY

Sydney Salt's small book of unusual verse, *Thirty Pieces* (Caravel Press—41 pages) is disturbing in its first impression, but entirely satisfying on subsequent readings. Mr. Salt has in his style traces of William Carlos Williams, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and a little of D. H. Lawrence, with the emphasis on the first named.

His is an exceedingly deft touch, particularly in dealing with death, which seems to hold a compelling grasp on the poet's mind. Yet there is another vein—"Saga of Three Hoboes" is an example—just as capably done, which convinces us that Mr. Salt has depths as yet only lightly touched. Only a few selections have the purposeless obscurity of "Two Horses". Most of the work is of the calibre of the bit with which the book opens, "Your Still Body", which, lacking rhyme and having an indeterminate rhythm, still is poetry of the first water.

*Death makes mighty warriors of us.
You too, pigeon in the gutter,
are poised for flight;
your wing an unfurled banner
that once knew intimate skies,
and your tail stretched stiff
still carries motion in forgotten direction.*

*O little warrior of little battles,
this, your last battle, found you
mighty in death with unfurled wing.*

Whether this collection is composed of *thirty pieces of silver* or not, we can't as yet be certain, but this we know—that Mr. Salt's contribution to what some call the lost cause of free verse is the worthiest we have seen in many a poetry volume.

Elizabeth Ashfield McCulloch, in her first book of poems, *Far Horizons* (Dorrance and Co., Inc.—48 pages), and Agnes Sheffield Welch, in her second, *Panorama* (Bruce Humphries, Inc.—95 pages), both turn to scenes of travel for their inspiration. Speaking generally, Agnes Welch's sonnets, though they sometimes forget to sing, are better done than Mrs. McCulloch's verses. Otherwise, they show a certain knack in getting to the heart of a country and its people in a few phrases and, whatever their poetic appeal, they will undoubtedly bring a yearning to the hearts of seekers after far horizons.

To apply the word *proletarian* to Le-Garde S. Doughty's fine poem of forty-five quatrains is to apply a word opprobrious to the many who do not like to see social improvement incorporated into literature. *With Lips of Rue* (The Kaleidograph Press) will do much to awaken a social consciousness in those who generally find abhorrence in radical fire and brimstone, for Mr. Doughty is a poet—one of the best to come out of the South since Ernest Hartsock's lyrical voice was silenced. It is in effect a modern Rubaiyat, couched in the same style, but substituting for the Persian's hedonistic philosophy one of broad humanitarian instincts.

In Mr. Doughty's long poem, sung, as he admits, "with lips of rue", he comes out strongly against greed:

*"The flower thrives on verdure's
death," you cry.*

*I answer: "So to live—a cosmic
law."*



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You say: "The warbler snares the moth." And I:

"To stem its hunger; not to stuff its maw."

There is an epigrammatic touch of Stephen Crane done into rhyme in quatrains XXXVII and XXXVIII:

In a quaint old shop I saw a jeweled crown,

(O wise shopkeeper!) mounted on a rag.

The price? (O frank shopkeeper!) Bending down

I read: "Dishonor" scribbled on the tag.

I saw a tray of crosses rusted red

Propped in a corner on a broken stool.

The dingy card (O sage shopkeeper!) said:

"Retired Odds and Ends.—Take one, you Fool!"

We do not think Mr. Doughty will fail us in his future publications.

The latest offering from the facile and versatile pen of Benjamin Francis Musser is *A Chaplet of Sanctuaries* (The Magnificat Press—67 pages). In the Foreword to this quiet book of devotional verse, Mr. Musser tells us it has been "a labor of love offered to the Holy Ever-Virgin Mother of God, in honor of a few of her present-day shrines and places of pilgrimage throughout the world" Reluctantly Mr. Musser limits his poems to fifty, thus paralleling the fifty Aves of a Chaplet—hence the title.

Five stops of the poet's pilgrimage are in this country, the remainder devoted largely to Old World shrines. They take him from Savona's ancient altar whither "came On pilgrimage great Constantine; And in his wake the halt, the lame" to the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception now going up in Washington, D. C. In all humility towards the magnitude of his undertaking, Mr. Musser offers his book—

*Critic, forgive my limping lines;
Mary, pardon my fragile pen;
Words cannot serve those God-born shrines,
To Whom be ultimate glory. Amen.*

As poetry the book is not likely to interest all of Mr. Musser's admirers, but it is a beautiful offering to his faith and as such will be treasured by all its followers. Just as faithfully has the book been carried out physically. Published by a press devoted to Catholic publications, it is printed in a Mary-blue ink with a binding of the same colour. It is inside and out a labour of love.

Heretofore Walter E. Manges has been known only as the artist who has appeared on these pages upon several occasions. Now he appears as co-compiler with David E. Nichols of a volume of *Western Pennsylvania Poets 1934-35* (Anthology Publications—259 pages), containing the work of two hundred poets living west of Harrisburg.

As a first gleanings it comes out surprisingly rich. No anthology yet published has included a group of contributors of uniformly high quality. It might well have been possible to bring in well-known Pennsylvania poets, like Jeffers, Allen, Wood, Cowley, and numerous others, but no attempt evidently was made to do this. However, there are a number of names known to readers of the poetry journals, names like Marion Doyle, Joseph Grucci, Lucie Karme Gillett, Edith Heilman, and a number of others. Many more names are entirely unknown, this being their first appearance on the printed page. Alice Marie Dorr, a student at Wilson College, and Rupert Hayden are two of these unknowns who show promise.

What impresses us most are the themes chosen by many of the included rhymesters. They stay close to their environment, the things they understand. They are more likely to write of mill towns than of the vicariously enjoyed

Sensational!

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pleasures of old Cathay. And this is a trait good in all poets.

Not the least of the book's charm lies in the many fine illustrations by Mr. Manges, who also designed the book, a fine example of printing art.

Since my fellow commentators have sedulously avoided reference to it, perhaps I may be excused for quoting those two best known lines in Lovelace's "To Althea, from Prison" in contemplation of work from the pens of two prison poets. Certain it is that a reading of D'Nova's *Folly's Facets* and Adrian Huffman's *Atonement's Offerings* convinces us that *Stone walls do not a prison make, Nor iron bars a cage.*

D'Nova's "Vae Victis", a longish poem of forty-eight stanzas, is as effective a diatribe against past prison abuses as you may ever expect to read, while at the same time withholding personal bitterness on the part of the poet. It is a fine poem, perhaps the best in either of the two books, and has lines that will remain with you longer than you might wish them to, bringing to mind without at all imitating Wilde's magnificent ballad of prison.

Huffman's escape is through the mind. In the last poem of the book, "Emancipation", he asks, *Shall bars for long repel Or dull the light That softly floods his cell Who thinks aright?* The answer is of course no, for both these poets are thoroughly sane men, not flighty, not hackneyed versifiers—whose personal circumstances colour much of their work, but does not colour it grey.

At the present time, movements are under way to free both of these men. We sincerely hope—in full light and knowledge of their offences—that both will be successful, so that the restrictions now of necessity placed upon them will be removed to permit a full flowering of their talents.

Veiled Eros (Henry Harrison—95 pages), the seventh—and, we are told, the last—of Archibald Rutledge's poetry collections, provides a splendid last word from this Pennsylvania poet; and is one of the best volumes published by the House of Harrison for some time.

In this book, regrettably our first acquaintance with Mr. Rutledge's poetry, we find the same interest in nature that is evidenced in the author's prose. His is not a "Nature, red in tooth and claw", but a nature peaceful and serene, where man comes to admire and not to despoil. Says he:

*There is a peace the world can never
give,
But nature grants it, joyous and profound,
Unto a heart to beauty sensitive . . .
That conquering compassion he has
found
Who on the heart of God, in wild-
woods lone,
Sustains and stills the beating of his
own.*

The book contains a section titled by the author *Fellow Pilgrims*, a trifle marred by its reiteration of the death motif, but ably executed. The last poem of the book, "Requiem", is a gem, and there is a very fine sonnet, personifying "The Dreaming Mast", which closes—

*High in the heavens, soaring dark and
strong,
Conferring with the clouds and with
the stars,
He hears the waves as his lost forest-
song,
And when the moonbeams sleep along
the spars,
He dreams, while swaying o'er the
lonely foam,
That he is rocking in his mountain
home.*